

Arboretum Associates Board Meeting

Thursday, September 14, 2023

UI Facilities Large Conference Room

Present: Paul Warnick, Erik Anderson, Lucy Falcy, Kris Roby, Harriet Hughes, Nancy Sprague, Nancy Zabriskie, Jan Leander

Absent: Kat Clancy, Julie Miller, Yvonne Barkley, Frank Clarke

Approval of Minutes

It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the May 1, 2023 meeting. Motion passed.

Plant Sale

Jan led a discussion of potential options for next year's plant sale. If the new ice rink space is used again, Jan has ideas for a more efficient way to set it up, particularly for the exit and entrance areas. She suggested four sandwich boards be purchased to make clear where parking is available. Additional publicity would also be helpful. Jan also discussed space options at the Fairgrounds, including the Depot and the Poultry Barn, which has a new cement floor. Paul reviewed several alternatives for next year's sale: continue with the status quo, using the ice rink; shrink the sale significantly and consider holding it outside; something in between those options; or not having a sale at all. Last year's sale was stressful with more work involved in taking care of the plants. He definitely would like to cut back on the number of plants. The financial results were OK and people still like the sale. The plant sale is viewed as a good community-building opportunity. Jan will check with the ice rink and tell them that we have not yet decided on the future of the plant sale, but will let them know as soon as the Board makes a decision.

Report on Financial Condition

Paul, Lucy, Erik, and Franke met to discuss the Arboretum Associates' finances two weeks ago. Paul presented a summary of the current amounts that are available to spend and provided a handout with a list of current endowments. Incoming gifts generally cover our annual costs each year. The Board supported spending up to \$100,000 for current top priorities including replacing the Arboretum's old truck and utility vehicles.

Arbor Notes

Erik distributed a handout prepared by Yvonne with information on the December 2023 issue of Arbor Notes. The submission deadline is October 13, 2023 and the in hand date is December 8, 2023. Yvonne provided a detailed list of suggested content, including an article on garden gifts. Lucy also proposed including an article on all that the Arboretum does for sustainability. An issue length of 16 pages was preferred. A discussion of how many issues we want to produce per year was postponed until a later meeting.

Summer Concert

This year's concert was very successful with an estimated crowd of 400. Next year's concert will be held on Monday, July 8, 2024. Paul reported that parking was becoming an issue.

Annual Meeting

Options for the annual meeting were discussed, with the consensus being to keep it simple with light refreshments and a focus on Paul's report. A date in mid April will be selected at our October meeting, after checking the University calendar.

Arboreta Updates

Paul presented a slideshow highlighting major projects over the past few months, including:

- Treatment of ponds with two different aquatic herbicides by a Spokane company, with no discernible impact.
- New planting of Desert or MacFarlane's Four O'Clocks (*Mirabilis macfarlanei*), a showy, rare wildflower native to Idaho and Oregon.
- Some of the Palouse Prairie plantings, such as *Clarkia*, did well. These plantings needed to be hand-weeded several times, so it may be difficult to scale up this project.
- New planting of 16 shade trees above the rock wall by the barn went well.
- Re-mulching of paths with cedar chips from Idaho Cedar in Troy made a big visual impact.
- New planting of unusual Pink-flowering Oceanspray near the ferns.
- New kid-friendly areas, including a sandbox made with logs and filled with pea gravel.
- New signage for the shade trees and donor recognition.
- Annual bed was spectacular with numerous pollinators.
- Camperdown elm project.
- Road trips with the Arboretum crew to the Kennewick Master Gardener Garden and the Walla Walla Nursery.

Recent challenges include:

- Changes in the reclaimed water system, resulting in a significant decrease in the amount of water available for irrigation.
- Vandalism of sprinkler heads and graffiti on garbage cans.
- Record low water levels on both ponds.
- Difficulty finding contractors willing to work on the bridge or pathway projects.

Meeting adjourned at 7:15pm.

Next meeting: Date not yet confirmed.